Agreement with Israel for Cotton Cultivation

441. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH :
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the government have signed any agreement with Israel for the expansion of cotton cultivation in the country;

(b) if so, the broad-features of the said agreement; and

(c) the time by which the agreement is likely to be effective ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (c) The Government have not signed any agreement with Israel for expansion of cotton cultivation in the country.

[Translation]

Ban on Smoking

442. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any notification to ban smoking in public places was issued in the capital in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up mobile courts for effective implementation of the ban; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi has passed the Delhi Prohibition of Smoking and Non-smokers Health Protection Act, 1996 which was gazetted on 1st January 1997. Under this Act the Government of Delhi has proposed ban on smoking of tabacco in any form at a place of public work or use and also in a public service vehicle.

(c) and (d) Under the Delhi Prohibition of Smoking and Non-smokers Health Protection Act, 1996, there is no provision for mobile courts. However, all officers of the rank of Under Secretary and above have been authorised to eject any person from the place of public work or use who contravenes the provision of this Act.

[English]

Damage to Taj Mahal

443. SHRI SATYAJITSINGH DULIPSINGH GAEKWAD : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the extent to which damage has been caused to the Taj Mahal by omission from the Mathura Rafinery for years together; and

(b) the latest position with regard to shifting of industries from outside the Taj Trapezium for protecting the Taj ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Studies commisioned so far have not established conclusive evidance that the Taj Mahal has been damaged from omissions from the Mathura Refinery.

(b) With regard to shifting of industries outside the Taj Trapezium, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has given a Judgement on 30th December, 1996 directing that the industries which are not in a position to obtain gas connections and also the industries which do not wish to obtain gas connections may approach/apply to the Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Corporation (UPBIDC)/Government before February 28, 1997 for allotment of alternative plots in the industrial estates outside the Agra-Mathura Trapezium. Those industries which neither apply for gas connection nor for an alternative industrial plot shall stop functioning with coke/coal in the Agra-Mathura Trapezium with effect from April 30, 1997. Supply of coke/coal to these industries shall be stopped forthwith. The relocating industries shall set up their respective units in the new industrial estates outside the Taj Trapezium. The relocating industries shall not function and operate in the Taj Trapezium beyond December 31, 1997.

Drugs under Drug Price Control

444. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have recently pruned the list of drugs to be retained in the Drug Price Control Order, 1995;

(b) if so, the names of the drugs taken out of DPCO;

(c) whether further pruning of DPCO is under consideration and details of the exercise alongwith the drugs involved therein; and

(d) the present status of the proposal ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Price control on drugs is in accordance with the policy laid down in "Modifications in Drug Policy, 1996" and, presently no change in the said policy is envisaged.